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ABSTRACT

This booklet offers parents guidance on how to partner with teachers to help their children acquire the skills, attitudes, and habits to do well in school and throughout life. The booklet begins with a description of how preschool children learn, and continues with a discussion of the goals of the preschool curriculum related to social-emotional development, physical development, cognitive development, and language development. The importance of children's social and emotional skills is explained. The booklet discusses the content of children's learning in preschool for the following areas: literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology. The booklet emphasizes the ways preschool children learn through the organization of the classroom, the daily schedule, classroom activities, and from their outdoor play. A table delineates what children are learning in various play and other activities. Procedures for assessing children's progress in learning are also presented. The booklet concludes with suggestions for parents to help their children learn at home in the same areas as preschool classroom learning. (KB)

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a parent's guide to preschool

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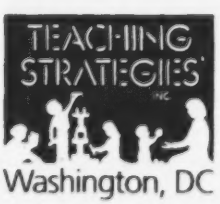
TEACHING STRATEGIES

a parent's guide to preschool



Washington, DC

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Introduction

Do you want your child to...

get along with others?
do well in school?
become a good reader?
solve math problems?
speak and write well?
be creative?
make decisions?
develop physical skills?
have good study habits?
be self-confident and respectful?
enjoy learning?

Our preschool program can help prepare your child for success in school—and in life. New research on the brain and on learning shows how important the early years are in a child's learning and development. What happens in preschool matters a lot. And what you do at home is even more important.

The purpose of this booklet is to explain our curriculum and how we can work together—at home and at school—to help your child acquire the skills, attitudes, and habits to do well in school and throughout life.

Parents ask, "What is my child actually learning in preschool? And what can I do at home to help?" *A Parent's Guide to Preschool* answers these questions.

Working together, we can give your child the best start for school.

How Your Preschool Child Learns

Your child is at a special stage. Children ages 3 to 5 are learning all the time—and they learn best by being active. Like other preschool children, your child probably asks lots of questions: How does this work? What makes plants grow? How do worms move if they don't have legs? What's inside this old clock? Preschoolers are very curious about their world.

We could answer these questions, and sometimes we do. But because we want children to see themselves as inventors, problem solvers, discoverers, and capable learners, we help them develop their natural curiosity. We encourage them to observe, explore, take things apart, build, create, draw, and see what they can find out. The more active children are in their work, the more they learn and remember.

While preschool children are alike in many ways, no other child is exactly like your child. And no one knows your child better than you do. You know how your child learns and reacts to new situations, so you can help your child's teachers. If you share with us what is happening to your child at home—the arrival of a new baby, the death of a pet, nightmares, temper tantrums, trips, separation, or divorce—we can understand your child better. We can support positive and difficult events through reassuring stories, soothing art activities, imaginative dramatic play, and extra love and attention.

If your child has a health problem such as an allergy, diabetes, or asthma, please let us know what we can do to keep your child safe. We also want to know if your child has a diagnosed disability or any other type of special need. While a child may have a disability in one or more areas of development, in other areas a child may be developing at a completely normal rate. We will do everything we can to help your child participate as fully as possible in all aspects of our program.

The Goals of Our Curriculum

The most important goals of our preschool curriculum are for children to get along well with others and become enthusiastic learners. We want children to become independent, self-confident, curious learners who can work well with others. We're teaching them **how** to learn, not just in preschool, but all through their lives. We do this by creating purposeful and productive play experiences that help children grow in all areas.

Our curriculum identifies goals in four areas of development.

- **Social/emotional:** to help children develop independence, self-confidence, and self-control, follow rules and routines, make friends, and learn what it means to be part of a group.

- **Physical:** to increase children's large muscle skills—balancing, running, jumping, throwing and catching—and use the small muscles in their hands to do tasks like buttoning, stringing beads, cutting, drawing, and writing.

- **Cognitive:** to acquire thinking skills such as the ability to solve problems, to ask questions, and to think logically—sorting, classifying, comparing, counting, and making patterns—and to use materials and their imagination to show what they have learned.

- **Language:** to use words to communicate with others, listen to and participate in conversations with others, understand the purpose of print, recognize letters and words, and begin writing for a purpose.

Through the activities we plan and the way we organize the classroom, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, and talk with children, we seek to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give your child a successful start in school.

Why Social and Emotional Skills Are So Important

Who does best in school?

Children who know how to make friends

Children who can cooperate with others

Children who can control their emotions

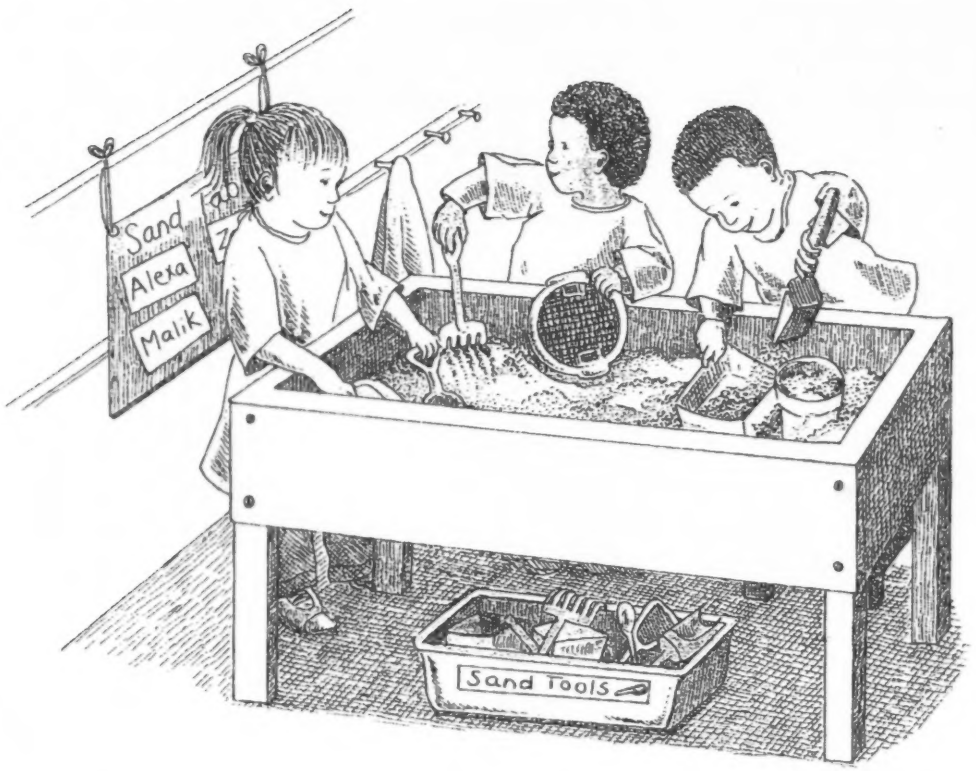
Children with strong social and emotional skills are more likely to be successful in school and in life than children who do not have these skills. That's why we want to help your child develop self-confidence, self-control, and the ability to make friends.

Developing self-confidence. Confident children have a "can-do attitude" about life. They are not afraid to try new things. They don't give up when something is difficult—they keep trying until they get it. To build self-confidence, we plan activities and provide materials that are challenging for children—but not too challenging—so they experience success. We see what interests children. We encourage them to experiment and find answers to their own questions as they play.

Learning self-control. Children with self-control are able to manage their emotions and not simply act out if they are angry or frustrated. They talk about the problem rather than calling another child names and using threats to get their way. We teach children how to calm down and help them use words to get their needs met: "I don't like it when you hit me. Stop it!" or "I was still playing with the shovel. You can have it when I'm finished."

Making friends. Every child needs a friend. Children who do not have friends are often unhappy. They worry about why others don't like them. They feel alone. As they get older, children without friends often have trouble learning and may resist going to school. We watch for any problems and we teach children how to make and keep a friend.

Children learn social and emotional skills from the ways people treat them. When you visit our classroom, you will see and hear what we do to help children develop social and emotional skills. The chart on the next page gives some examples.



What We Do	What We Say	Why
Bend down to talk to a child who is upset	"I want to hear what is bothering you so I can help. Tell me what happened."	To let the child know we are interested and we care
Point out children's special skills and interests	"Ask Sarah to help you start the computer and find the program you want. She knows just where it is."	To help children appreciate each other's strengths and interests in order to build respect and friendships
Describe the behavior we want to see in positive terms	"Walk in the classroom. If you run, you might get hurt. Save your running for outdoor time."	To help children learn the rules and why they should be followed
Encourage children to help each other	"Leo has a big job today wiping off the tables after finger painting. Who can give him some help?"	To encourage children to be helpful and to share responsibility for the classroom
Show children how to identify feelings by noticing facial expressions and body language	"Look at Hannah's face. Can you see that she is angry? Let's find out what's wrong. Maybe we can help."	To guide children in learning to recognize how others feel and develop empathy
Help children calm down and use words to describe and solve a problem	"You are both upset. Let's stop and take some deep breaths. I want to hear what both of you have to say. Then we'll see what ideas you have for solving the problem."	To teach children how to resolve problems on their own

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What Children Learn in Preschool

You probably have academic goals for your child: to be a good reader and writer, to solve problems in math and science, to be a good citizen in the world, to appreciate the arts, and to use technology. We share the same goals, but learning in preschool looks different from learning in elementary school. Here's how we help your child learn.

Literacy

The ability to communicate with others—through speaking and listening, reading and writing—is essential for success in school and in life. In our program, we plan experiences every day to help your child develop these important skills.

- **Listening and speaking:** Children who know lots of vocabulary words usually have an easier time learning to read. They learn new words when adults talk with them, describe what they see, name things, and explain what new words mean. During these conversations children learn to listen to and understand what others say and to express their ideas in words and sentences.

  When you visit our program, you will hear a lot of talking. We talk with children as they play to describe what they are doing ("You made a tall tower," or "You used three colors in your picture: red, yellow, and blue.") We ask questions to encourage children to express their ideas in words ("What do you see the caterpillar doing?" or "What do you like best about this picture?"). We take time to listen carefully to what children have to say. And we encourage children to talk with each other as they play.

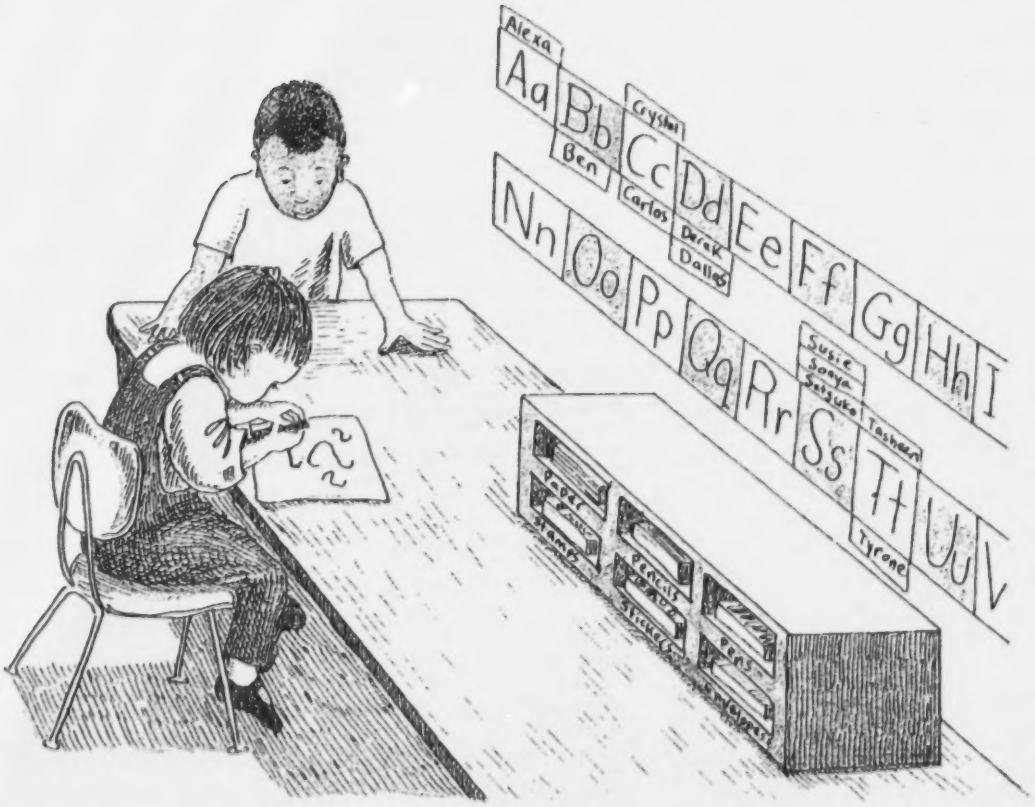
- **Early reading:** Reading is about getting meaning from print. Readers know that written words convey messages. They understand how books work: you turn pages from right to left; pictures show what the words say; stories have a beginning, middle, and end. Readers know that words are made up of letters and letters stand for sounds.

  In preschool, children begin to learn the names of the letters and their order. Of course, the most important letters in the alphabet are those in each child's name. So we start with those letters first. We post children's names on their cubbies, on our job chart, on their work, and we encourage them to start writing their names.

  Your child will also learn to explore the sounds in language: words that rhyme (hop/pop, cat/mat), and words that start with the same sound (Peter, pet, pot). This is called "phonological awareness." To teach this skill we sing songs, recite poems, and read books that play with words.

  Most importantly, we want children to want to read. The best way to encourage children to become good readers is to read to them every day. We have lots of wonderful books in our classroom, not just in the Library but in every interest area.

- **Early writing:** Reading and writing go together. When children scribble on paper and tell us what it means, we know they are beginning to understand what writing is all about. We encourage this beginning writing. We show children how we use writing to convey messages—writing down their words, their names, making lists and signs for the room. In our classroom you will see paper and writing tools in our Library and in other places in the room. For example, we keep writing supplies in the Block Area so children can make signs for their buildings and in the Dramatic Play Area so children can take phone messages and write prescriptions.



Math

Bigger. Longer. Smaller. More. Less. The same. How many? Math is more than just knowing numbers and counting. It's about organizing information, comparing amounts, seeing relationships. Math involves logical thinking.

Just as the alphabet song helps children learn the names of 26 letters and their order, counting songs and rhymes teach children to recite numbers in the correct order. But they need lots of experiences with objects to really understand what a number like "4" actually represents, and to be able to think logically—like a mathematician.

Here are some of the experiences your child will have in preschool and what math skills your child will learn.

What Your Child May Do	What We Might Say	What Math Skills Your Child Learns
String beads in a pattern: red, yellow, blue; red, yellow, blue	"You just put a yellow bead on your string. How do you decide what comes next?"	Making and repeating patterns
Sort and organize objects like colored shapes, leaves, bottle caps	"Which group has more? Let's count them and see."	Organizing and comparing information Counting
Follow the steps in a recipe using picture cards, measuring spoons, and cups	"How many cups of flour do we need?" "What does the recipe card say to do in step 3?"	Following the steps in order Using math in everyday experiences Measuring
Make a fence out of blocks for the plastic animals	"I see you made a fence to keep your animals safe. You made a rectangle."	Recognizing and learning the names of shapes
Organize a collection of keys into two piles: large and small	"You noticed the keys are different sizes. Can you put them in a line from largest to smallest?"	Placing objects in a logical order

As you can see, children develop math skills every day as they play with different materials and have conversations about what they are doing.

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Science

Young children are natural scientists. They notice and wonder about things, ask questions, and come up with possible answers. Then they test their ideas, observe what happens, and share their discoveries.

Some children love insects and pets and want to find out what they eat, how they move and feel, and how they reproduce. Other children are more interested in how things work. They want to take apart a flashlight, use a balance scale to weigh objects, or test how fast a toy car can go down a ramp.

In our preschool, children can be scientists every day as they play. We have living things and materials for them to care for, observe, and explore. We give children tools to use in their science explorations—magnifying glasses, eyedroppers, measuring cups, magnets, gears, and scales. We encourage children to wonder and explain by asking:

- What do you see? Hear? Smell?
- What would happen if you tried it this way?
- What did you find out?

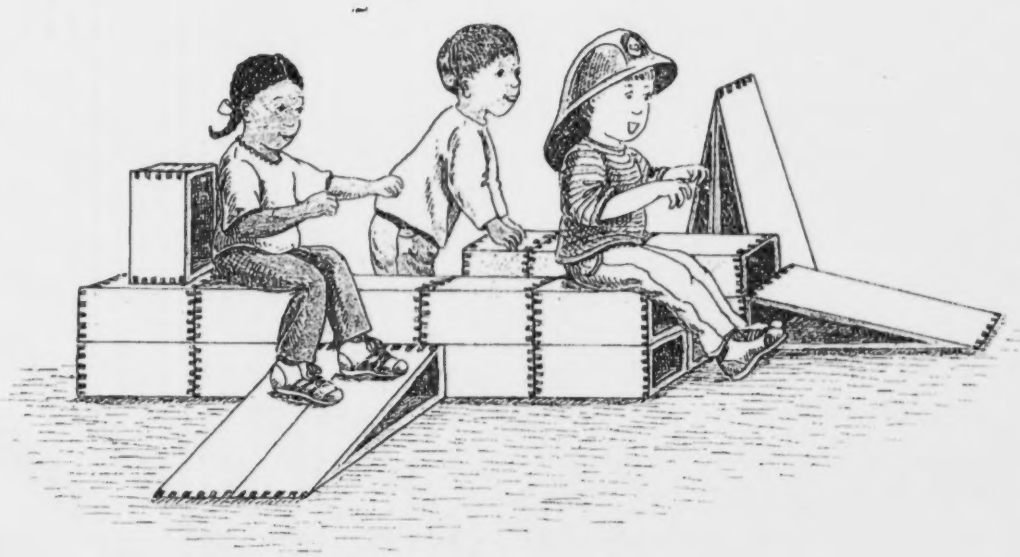
And we listen carefully to what children say to understand what they are thinking.

Social Studies

Children are naturally curious about the world they live in—where people live, what jobs they do, how they use and take care of the environment. This is social studies. Perhaps your child asks questions like:

- What do you do all day when I am in school?
- Who takes care of the animals at the zoo?
- Did those workers build this street?
- What happens to the bus when the driver eats lunch?

In our program, children learn about social studies by being in a group. They help to make the rules for our classroom, make choices, learn to accept different points of view, and treat others as they want to be treated. And we study different topics, sometimes for weeks or even months, so children get to be "experts" in investigating why things are the way they are. We might study the grocery store—who works there, how they do their jobs, how they display the food and keep it fresh, where food comes from. We hope you will join us on one of our field trips and share what you know about the topics we are studying.

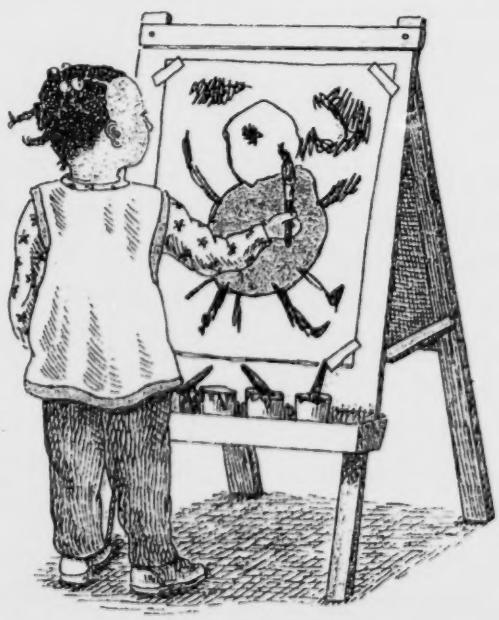


The Arts

Young children love to draw, paint, cut and paste, and mold clay and dough. They also enjoy moving to and making music, and pretending. They love these activities because they are fun and satisfying. But the arts are important for another reason. They give children different ways to express what they know and feel. This is why it is so important for children to create their own works of art. If we gave children coloring books, asked them to follow patterns, or told them that everything had to be done the same way, they would just be copying another person's ideas.

In our program, we provide lots of creative art materials—paints, markers, crayons, paper, clay, dough, collage materials, scissors, and glue—and encourage children to create their own pictures and structures. We take an interest in what they do and we say: "Tell me about your picture." Because children's artwork shows their learning, our walls are covered with children's work. You won't see art projects that all look the same.

We involve children in all the arts. We encourage them to pretend about situations or experiences they have had so they gain understanding. We sing songs every day, and we invite children to move to music, all different kinds. Children play instruments to make up their own songs or to keep time with a march or a song we are singing.



Technology

Most of us think of computers when we hear the word "technology." We show children how to use computers to find information, write stories, solve problems, and play games.

But technology is more than computers. It's about using tools to get a job done. Children use tools at our workbench—hammers, saws, drills. They use a tape recorder to listen to stories and songs or to record their own. They show their understanding of how to use tools when they pretend to scan items in the grocery store, open and close a cash register, use a mouse and keyboard to navigate through a computer program, or use binoculars to observe a mother bird feeding her babies in a tree.

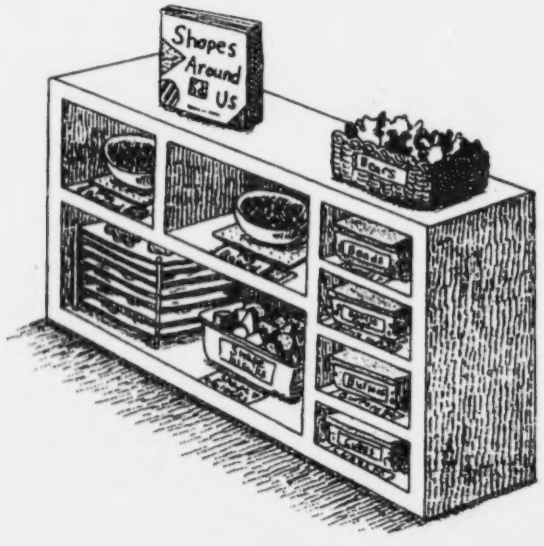
How Children Learn in Preschool

Children are learning every minute of the day. They learn from the way we organize the classroom, from the daily schedule, from activities, and from their outdoor play.

The Classroom

Our classroom is set up for learning. Children have many opportunities to make choices, come up with ideas, experiment, and take responsibility for their work. Here's what you'll see when you visit.

- Materials are on low shelves, in containers, and on hooks so children can get them independently and put them away.
- Shelves are neat and uncluttered so materials are easy to see, remove, and replace.
- Picture and word labels are on containers and shelves so children know where materials belong and learn to use print.



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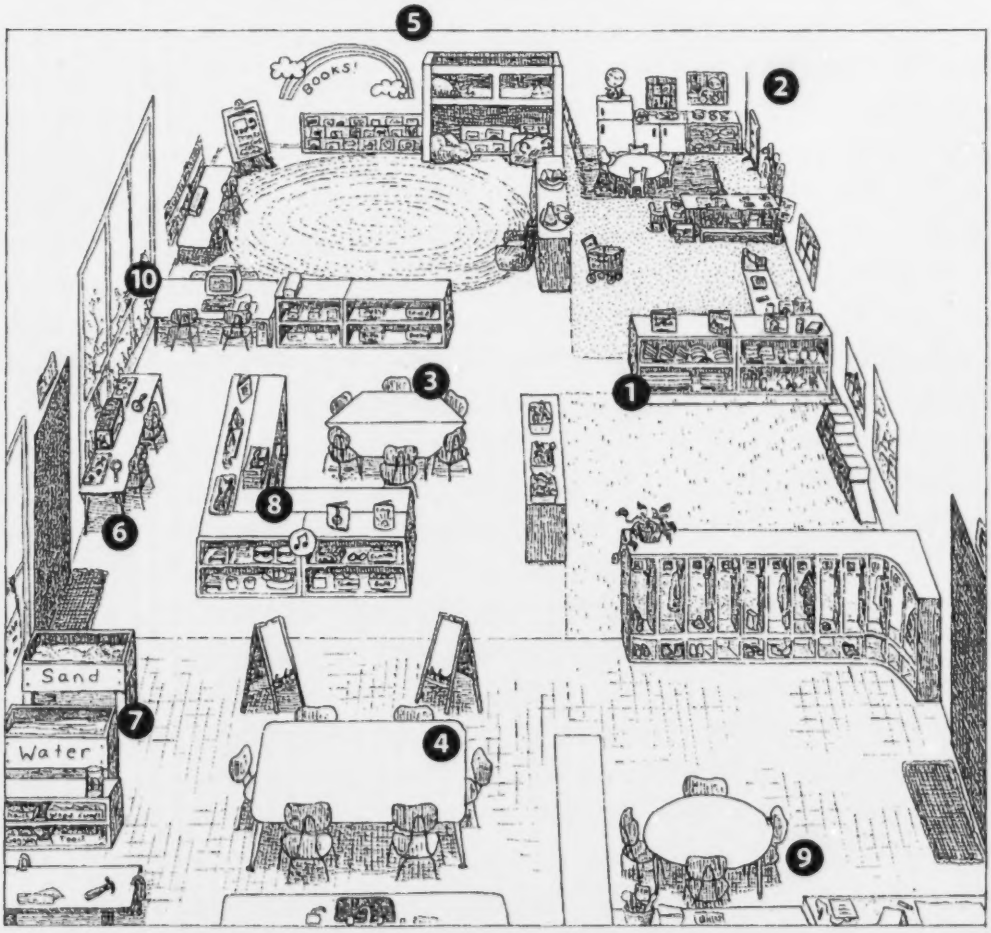
- There are distinct interest areas—blocks, dramatic play, toys and games, art, discovery, library, sand and water, music and movement, cooking, computers, and different play spaces outdoors—so children know what choices are available and make decisions.

- A variety of learning materials are in each area so that no matter where children choose to play, they learn.

- Similar materials are grouped together to teach children to sort and classify—skills that are important to understanding and solving math problems.



1. Blocks
2. Dramatic Play
3. Toys and Games
4. Art
5. Library
6. Discovery
7. Sand and Water
8. Music and Movement
9. Cooking
10. Computers

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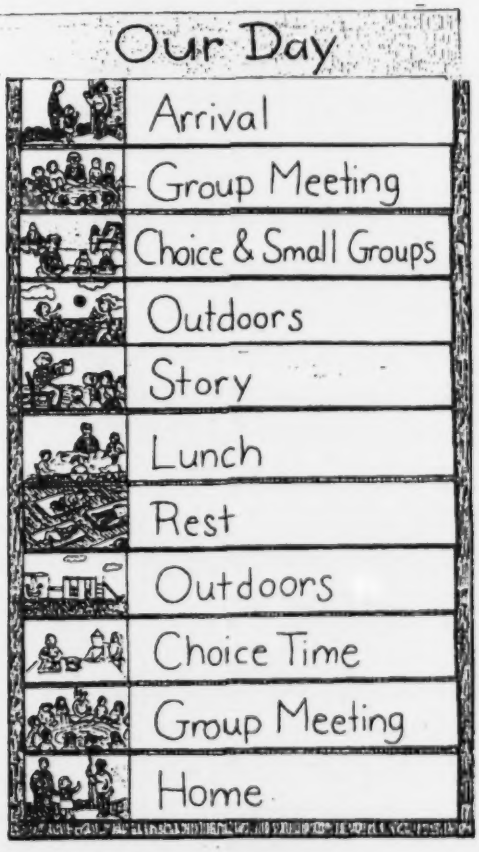
The Daily Schedule

We want your child to feel secure and independent, to move from one activity to another as easily and confidently as possible. And we want to provide a variety of learning experiences for a well-rounded education. So we plan a daily schedule with these goals in mind. We follow this same schedule day after day. A picture schedule like the one below helps children feel secure because they know what comes next.



This schedule works well for us. After a few months, children are amazingly independent. They tell us what they are supposed to do next!

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Classroom Activities

When you visit your child's classroom, you see a room full of children playing. You may wonder what we are doing to help children learn. As children play, we watch how they use materials. We listen. We talk with them to find out what they are thinking and trying to do. We help children become aware of their actions, offer suggestions, and think about what materials to offer next. Then we challenge them to think further. This is how we encourage the development of skills children will need in elementary school. Here are some examples.

	When children do this	They are learning to
Blocks	Use blocks and wooden people to create rooms in their home	Make maps of their world (social studies, math)
	Make bridges for cars	Use shapes to build (math)
		Plan ahead (study skills)
		Recreate structures they've seen (geography, problem solving)
Dramatic Play	Use a stethoscope to examine a doll and write a prescription	Pretend with objects (abstract thinking)
		Write for a purpose (literacy)
	Pretend to be a firefighter	Recall what they know about workers in their community (social studies)
		Act out roles (the arts)
Toys & Games	Finish an alphabet puzzle	Complete a task (study habits, self-confidence)
		Learn about the alphabet (literacy)
	Group pictures that are the same	Match and classify (math)

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	When children do this	They are learning to
Art	Gather paper, scissors, and glue for a project	Plan and carry out a task (study habits, independence)
	Draw a picture of their family	Use symbols to represent their ideas (literacy)
		Gain an understanding of what "family" means (social studies)
Discovery	Plant seeds and measure each plant's growth	Measurement (math)
		Plant life cycle (science)
	Use eyedroppers to add colors to containers of water	Mix colors (science)
		Small muscle development (writing)
Sand & Water	Pour water onto waterwheels to set them in motion	Cause and effect (science)
		Coordinate eye-hand movement (writing)
	Discover how many cups of sand fill a pail	Count and measure volume (math)
Computers	Try out a computer program together with another child	Share and play cooperatively with others (social skills)
	Type the letters of their names	Recognize and use alphabet letters (literacy)

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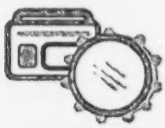
	When children do this	They are learning to
Library	Scribble on paper using some letters and tell what the scribble says	Use writing as a way to communicate (literacy) Make a connection between letters and the sounds they make (literacy)
	Listen to a story and talk about what happened	Love books, remember details, and express ideas (language development, literacy)
 **Music & Movement**	Sing or do a fingerplay with other children and the teacher	Participate cooperatively in a group (social skills) Recognize rhymes (phonological awareness, listening)
	Create different sounds by putting more (or fewer) beans in cans and shaking them	Explore cause and effect (science, logical thinking)
Cooking	Follow directions in a recipe that calls for adding ingredients by teaspoons, cups, etc.	Understand measurement (math) Read a recipe (literacy)
	Watch bread dough rise or melt butter	Understand that foods can change their physical states (science)

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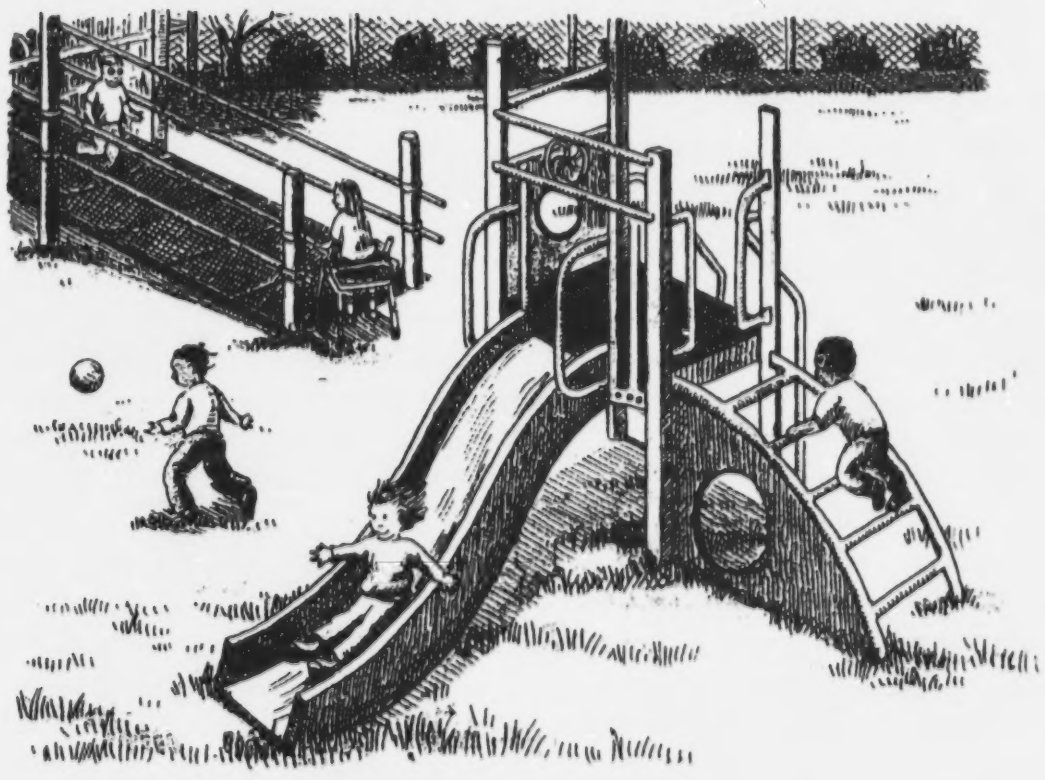
Outdoors

The time children spend outdoors every day is just as important to their learning as the time they spend in the classroom. Unless the weather is severe, we take children outdoors every day, often more than once.

Large muscle activities are essential for children's health and well-being. Too many children today are overweight. One reason is they don't get the large muscle activity essential for healthy development. Children need time each day to run, leap, hop, jump, slide, climb, and throw and catch a ball. These activities build strong muscles and a sense of pride. They are important for another reason as well. Brain research shows that physical activity actually wakes up the brain for learning.



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The outdoors greatly increases our learning environment. It is a natural setting for scientific investigations. Children find and study bugs and butterflies, plant seeds and watch them grow, and compare the feel of the bark on different trees. In some climates they notice the leaves change color and fall to the ground and learn about ice and snow. In other climates they learn how plants survive on almost no water. We talk with children about their discoveries and encourage them to continue investigating what they find outdoors.

When children do this	They are learning to
Follow each other up climbers, down slides, through tunnels	Develop an awareness of shapes and space (math and social studies) Make friends (social skills)
Work together to build a tunnel in the sandbox	Share space (social skills) Communicate ideas (literacy) Explore the properties of a natural material (science)
Pretend to be police stopping tricycle "cars"	Understand community roles and rules (social studies)
Notice color patterns on caterpillars	Recognize patterns in nature (math) Sharpen observational skills (science)
Catch and throw balls	Coordinate eye and hand movements (physical development)

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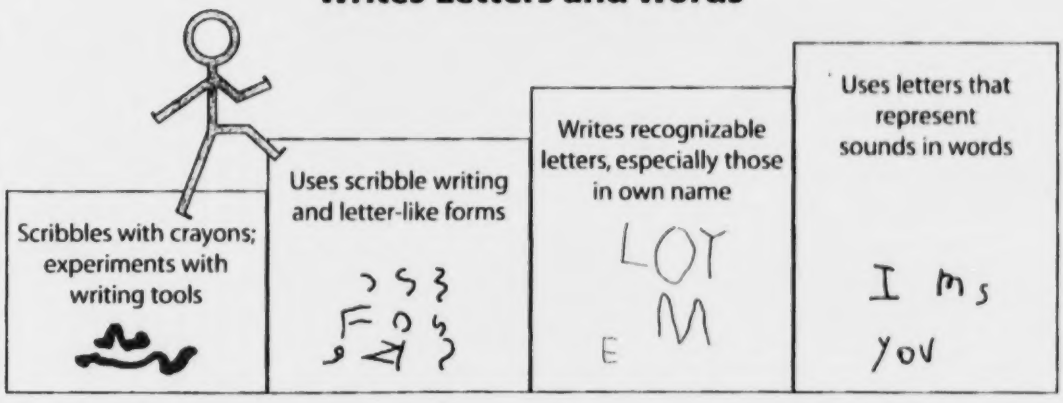
How We Know Children Are Learning

We want to be sure your child is making progress in our program. We don't leave learning to chance. That's why we keep track of what each child knows and can do. This information helps us to plan for further teaching and learning.

We can tell if your child is making progress because we know the steps preschool children typically go through in learning a skill. Just as toddlers go through stages in learning to walk (they sit up, crawl, stand, and then walk), preschoolers follow a typical path when they learn a new skill. We observe children's paths as they learn new skills and support them along the way.

To show you what we mean, let's look at one objective of our curriculum: "Writes letters and words." Preschool children often begin using scribble writing and shapes that look like letters. Then they may write some letters, especially the letters in their names. Later, they start to write letters that stand for words. They might write "dg" to stand for the word "dog." They write the sounds they hear. These are the steps we typically see.

Writes Letters and Words



By carefully observing each day, we find out what children know about letters and words. We may discover that many children are scribble writing. That tells us what experiences we can provide to build on what they know and help them move to the next step. For example, we would

- put out more alphabet puzzles and games
- display the alphabet and talk to children about which letters are in their names
- place writing materials in many interest areas so children can use them in their play, make signs for the block structures, and enjoy writing for a purpose

We don't need tests to find out what preschool children know. Tests are not reliable for this age group. Instead, we observe what children do and take notes. We collect samples of each child's work—drawings, writing, photos of artwork or block buildings—and keep them in a portfolio. Several times during the year we summarize this information and share it with you. We ask what you have seen your child do. Together, we gain a more complete picture of your child's progress. Then we can plan together how to support your child's learning.

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What Children Learn at Home

Many parents ask us what they can do to help their children succeed in school. You don't need to buy a lot of special toys or equipment to turn your child into a successful student. The best thing you can do is to take time to play with your child, read wonderful books together, and talk as you go about your normal, everyday household chores. Sometimes, after a long day at work, this may seem difficult. But you'll find that this kind of attention has a powerful effect on children and makes your job as a parent more fun and interesting—and sometimes easier.

You are your child's first and most important teacher. The way you talk with your child makes a big difference in how your child thinks and feels and the kind of person your child will become. If we can work together and do some of the same things at school and at home, your child will benefit in many ways.

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Literacy

How can you prepare your child to read and write? The most important way is to take time to listen to and talk with your child. Hold your child on your lap and read books together every day. Talk about the stories. And make sure your child sees you reading and writing. When grown-ups read and write, children know that reading and writing are important.

When you and your child...	You might say...	This helps your child...
Read books together	"Who is this story about? What do you think will happen next? Have you ever felt this way? Now it's your turn to tell the story to me."	Learn new vocabulary Understand what is read Express ideas and feelings
Talk about what happened during the day and together make up a story	"I wonder if anything happened today at school that made you laugh. Tell me about it."	Recall events Use language to express ideas and describe events Learn that parents feel school is important
Recite nursery rhymes, chants, and songs and then have fun changing the words that rhyme	"Let's sing 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star'...We'll make up a silly rhyme. How about 'Twinkle, twinkle little car, how I wonder what you are'?"	Hear the sounds in words (phonological awareness) Have fun playing with words
Notice street and store signs and talk about what they say and mean	"See that red sign? It says STOP. All cars, buses, and trucks stop at this sign. Let's see if we can find another stop sign."	Learn about print and what it means Learn that reading is important in the real world
Find letters from your child's name on food containers	"Holly, do you see a letter you know on this box of Honey-Nut Cheerios?"	Recognize and name some letters

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Math

You don't have to be a whiz at math to be a wonderful math teacher for your child. Lots of things you do at home every day involve math. The main idea is to include your child in these experiences and make them fun.

When you and your child...	You might say...	This helps your child...
Set the table for dinner	"Put one napkin (or plate, cup, fork) wherever you see a chair."	Match one to one when counting
Put away groceries	"Can you find all the food that needs to go into the refrigerator? Now hand me all the cans. Can you tell what is inside?"	Sort objects into categories Describe different foods
Sort and fold clothes	"Let's find all the socks first. They we'll see which ones go together."	Sort and match
Play with a collection of pennies, nickels, and dimes	"Can you put all the ones that look the same together? Which pile has the most? Let's count and find out."	Compare and organize Estimate Count
Prepare lunch together	"Would you like your sandwich cut in 2 triangles or 4 little squares?"	Make choices Learn the names of shapes

Science and Social Studies

Your child is naturally curious about the world. You can show that you are curious too by saying, "I wonder why..." when you see something interesting. Encourage your child to ask questions, observe things carefully, predict what will happen next, experiment, think about what happened, and share that information. There are many things that you do together in your everyday life that can help your child to learn about the natural world (science) and what people do (social studies).

When you and your child...	You might say...	This helps your child...
Prepare simple foods such as toast, pancakes, or scrambled eggs together	"Look how runny the egg is now. What do you think will happen when we heat it in the pan?"	Observe carefully Notice cause and effect Describe how things change Make predictions
Look at family photos together	"Let's look at some old photos of you. See that? That's you when you were a baby. What were you able to do? What can you do now that you couldn't do then?"	Learn how people change over time Learn about family history
Go for a walk and collect seeds and leaves	"I wonder why some leaves are green and some are yellow. What do you notice about this leaf? How is it different from the other leaves we found?"	Observe and describe Understand plant life
Pretend to be the people you met when you went to the doctor and act out what you saw them do	"Let's pretend we're back at the doctor's office and it's time for a check-up. Who do you want to be? What should the office look like?"	Learn about jobs people have in our community

The Arts and Technology

Your home is a place for your child to explore the arts and technology. It doesn't matter whether you can sing, dance, or act. Remember, for young children, the act of creating is what's important, not what the child produces. You don't need to be artistic yourself to raise a creative child. Keep in mind also that technology is about using tools to get a job done, whether it's an egg beater, a tape recorder, a screwdriver, or a computer.

When you and your child...	You might say...	This helps your child...
Turn on a tape recorder and listen to music together	"This music makes me want to clap. Let's do it together."	Operate a machine Become aware of rhythms and patterns Follow a beat
Go on the Internet together to find out what kind of caterpillar you found in your garden	"Let's see if we can find a picture that matches this caterpillar on the computer so we can learn more about it."	Learn how to find answers to questions Appreciate the value of computers
Dress up and pretend together	"I'm going to be a kitty and I'm going to pretend to lick my paw just like this and walk ever so quietly just like this. Who are you going to be? Show me and I'll try to guess who you are."	Observe people and animals more closely Make decisions Create a role
Talk about your child's artwork	"Tell me about your picture. How did you get the idea to draw it? What do you like best about it?"	Develop a sense of accomplishment Evaluate his/her own work

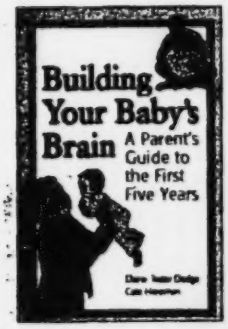
Conclusion

We hope that this booklet has helped you to understand our approach to preschool education and appreciate the important role you play in supporting your child's learning. The key to successful learning experiences is to figure out what interests your child. Then use those interests to engage your child in actively exploring and learning about the world. It doesn't matter where you live—city, farm, town, suburb, bayou, mountain, desert, tundra, or coast—or what kind of home you have. Every place is a learning environment for a child.

Together, at home and at school, we can help your child to...

get along with others
do well in school
become a good reader
solve math problems
speak and write well
be creative
make decisions
develop physical skills
have good study habits
be self-confident and respectful
enjoy learning

Teaching Strategies, Inc. strives to improve the quality of early childhood programs by producing comprehensive and practical curriculum and training materials. Our products and staff development services are making a difference in preschools, elementary schools, Head Start, school-age programs, and child care programs worldwide.

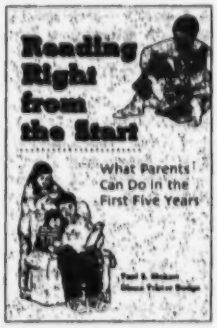


Building Your Baby's Brain:
A Parent's Guide to the First Five Years

It seems that every day there are new research findings and insights into the human brain. This clearly written booklet, packed full of illustrations and helpful charts, explains what scientists know about brain development. It shows how a few simple things parents can do every day can make a big difference.

#CB0003, $29.50 for a set of 10
Also available in Spanish: #CB0005, $29.50 for a set of 10

Reading Right from the Start
What Parents Can Do in the First Five Years



Discover how to build vocabulary, learn about conversations and discover meaning from the written word. This easy-to-read, illustrated booklet shows parents how to help their children (birth-5) gain the language and literacy skills necessary to become readers and writers. Instead of workbooks, special games, or other gimmicks, parents learn about the value of talking, singing, and reading every day to their children.

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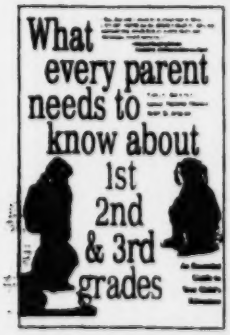

What Every Parent Needs to Know About 1st, 2nd & 3rd Grades

Full of real classroom examples, this book illustrates how teachers use their knowledge of child development to make learning interesting and meaningful. Parents learn what to look for in their child's classroom, how to talk with teachers about what their child is learning, and how they can help at home.

#CB0061, $12.95

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a parent's guide to preschool

Preschool can help prepare your child for success in school—and in life. These early years are so important to a child's development and learning. What happens in preschool matters a lot. And what you do at home is even more important.

Parents ask, "What is my child actually learning in preschool? And what can I do at home to help?" This illustrated booklet answers these questions and shows you how to partner with the teachers to help your child acquire the skills, attitudes, and habits to do well in school and throughout life.

Diane Trister Dodge, founder and president of Teaching Strategies, Inc., is a well-known speaker and author of numerous books for teachers, administrators, and parents. She has worked in Head Start, child care, and public school programs as a teacher and trainer and directed national projects on early childhood education.

Joanna Phinney is an early childhood educator with more than 25 years experience. Currently a kindergarten teacher, she has worked as a preschool teacher and consultant to preschool programs. She is a writer of picture books for children as well as for the FOOTSTEPS parent education television series.

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